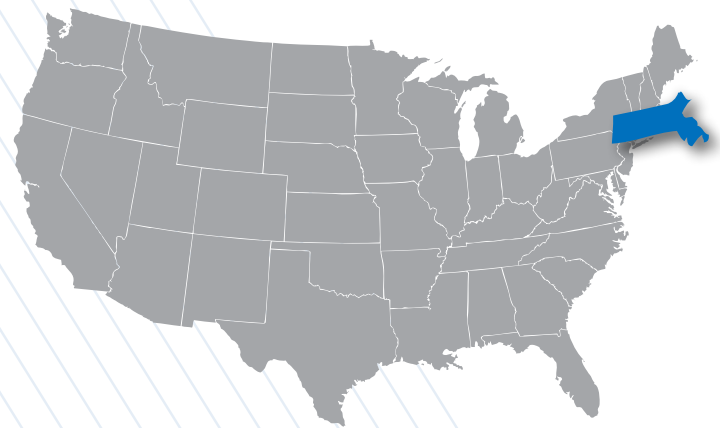


## Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MassMEP)

Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MassMEP) provides services that help manufacturers transform and grow their organizations. From workforce strategies to lean training to supply chain management, MassMEP delivers positive, measurable, and sustainable impact on a company's top and bottom lines. MassMEP is a believer that an innovative, successful manufacturing base is the key to higher paying jobs and a higher quality of life in the Commonwealth.

Key programs include Innovation for Growth, Workforce Strategies, Systemic Continuous Improvement, and Value Opportunity Profile.



### For more information, contact

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THE MEP NETWORK

### Massachusetts MEP CLIENT IMPACTS

*Impacts are based on clients receiving service in FY2012*

Total Increased/  
Retained Sales



**\$123.6 Million**

Total Increased/  
Retained Jobs



**1,843**

New Client  
Investments



**\$110.5 Million**

# CLIENT SUCCESS: BELLS POWDER COATING

*“The only way for American companies to see an increase in business is if they are able to compete in the global market. They have to be willing to try new ideas and to change. If you begin the continuous improvement process you must be serious and commit to it day after day- this is the only way it is going to work.”*

Paul Belham, Vice President and Co-owner

## Cost Savings, Energy Savings, and a New Product Line

Bell's Powder Coating is a family-owned and operated company providing custom powder coating services to many industries. Paul and Nancy Belham, a husband and wife team, started the company in 1998 and it now has 20 employees. Bell's is able to assure top quality and coat parts of any size and quantity due to its state of the art, automated production lines in North Attleboro, Massachusetts.

### Situation:

Bell's continues to improve, innovate and expand its powder coating business to different markets and customers. Bell's considered offering a new product: powder coated medium density fiberboard (MDF). The company researched the process and necessary equipment for manufacturing MDF seven years ago, but the findings were disappointing and the project was put on hold. Meanwhile, Bell's focused on reducing waste and operating costs with help from the Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MMEP), a NIST MEP affiliate. Employees learned the basics of lean manufacturing and participated in continuous improvement activities throughout the facility. Bell's discovered the need for pre-production planning procedures and the importance of inventory reduction. The company developed and implemented quick changeover procedures for key operations. With these improvements in place, Bell's decided to take a second look at the possibility of developing the MDF product line.

### Solution:

MMEP helped Bell's to analyze costs and opportunity to determine the viability of manufacturing powder coating MDF. They looked at the market for MDF, identified players in the industry, evaluated investment costs versus potential revenue, and started to create a business plan. Bell examined its natural gas consumption, and was able to propose gas usage changes and save \$27,000 per year in energy costs. Another advantage is a new paint booth that reclaims 98% of the powder coating from the air and collects it in hoppers for reuse.

Bell's was in a good position to move forward on the MDF product line due to the projected reduction in gas usage, benefits from efficiency improving equipment and its ongoing, plant-wide continuous improvement activities. Bell's successfully obtained \$120,000 to finance the new equipment. The new product line has boosted overall capacity, opened new markets and increased visibility. Fifteen companies expressed interest in MDF before Bell's even started to advertise.

### Results:

- \* Winning business back from China
- \* Introduced a new product line, entered new markets
- \* Hired 2 new employees
- \* 7% increase in productivity and ROI
- \* \$157,000 investment in new equipment
- \* 40% reduction in energy use
- \* \$27,000 annual gas savings

Introduced new product  
to new markets

2013